THE NEW
INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • SATURDAY • DECEMBER 09, 2023 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 22 • LATE CITY EDITION

PUTIN TO SEEK PRESIDENTIAL TERM AGAIN, EXTEND HIS RULE IN RUSSIA

Vladimir Putin on Friday said he will contest the next presidential election to be held in March. It's an election he is widely expected to win

The Russian president still commands wide support in the country despite staying in power for nearly a quarter-century. The Ukraine war he started, which led to the death of thousands of Russians, hasn't diminished his pull as about 80% of the populace approves his performance. A short rebellion, too, didn't leave any dent. At 71, Putin is in absolute contro | P12

His announcement came after a Kremlin award ceremony, when war veterans pleaded with him to seek re-election.

Putin is already the longest-serving Kremlin leader since Josef Stalin, who died in 1953. Stalin's reign started in 1929

READ **SHARE** FOLLOW
newindianexpress.com

• CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA
• BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD
• VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE
• KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
• BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA
• MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY
• TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI
• DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR
• VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM
• TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM
• THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

RBI holds key rate, asserts inflation focus

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

THE Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday refrained from springing any negative surprises as it kept the repo rate — the interest at which it lends money to banks — unchanged for the fifth time in a row.

Though RBI maintained its inflation target for the year at 5.4%, governor Shaktikanta Das made it clear that there is no softening of monetary policy stance as yet.

RBI, however, reposed its confidence in the robustness of the economy by raising its GDP forecast for FY24 by 50 bps to 7%. Cautioning against any complacency on the inflation front, Das said RBI has a long way to go before meeting the 4% inflation target. He said no change in policy stance for five times in a row should not send a signal that the regulator is tilting towards a neutral stance.

"The law requires us to maintain the inflation at 4%. Last year in May, we changed our stance to give priority to inflation over growth. There is no change in that stand. Inflation is our top priority now," he said. P13

TMC's Moitra expelled, gets Oppn support

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

Putting an end to the 'cash-for-query' row that stretched over two months, Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra was expelled from the 17th Lok Sabha on Friday. Her expulsion follows a report by a Lok Sabha ethics panel, which held her guilty of accepting gifts and favours in return for asking questions in Parliament at the behest of businessman Darshan Hiranandani.

Moitra was expelled through voice vote by the Lower House after Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi moved a motion based on the report of the ethics panel, which was tabled by BJP MP and committee chairman Vinod Kumar Sonkar earlier in the day.

"This House accepts the conclusions of the committee that Mahua Moitra's conduct was unethical and highly objectionable as an MP. So, it is not appropriate for her to continue as an MP," said Speaker Om Birla after the motion was adopted. The panel had also recommended a "legal, intensive, institutional and time-bound investigation" into the allegations against Moitra.

Rubbishing it as an unfair trial, a united Opposition, including Congress, JD(U), SP, TMC and several other parties staged a walkout while voting on the motion was underway.

Speaking to the press outside Parliament, Moitra lashed out at the ethic committee saying it had broken every rule in the book, adding there was no conclusive evidence of any money trail or gifts. "There was no evidence of any cash, any gifts anywhere. The recommendation of expulsion was solely based on the complaint that I shared my login. But there is no rule whatsoever in this regard. The Lok Sabha has presided over the most tenacious witch-hunt of one of the 78 MPs, a first-timer, a single woman, with no political lineage," said Moitra.

While Opposition MPs rallied behind her in a display of solidarity, Moitra was also accompanied by senior Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi outside Parliament.

Before voting on the motion, the House saw a heated discussion.

While TMC leaders Kalyan Banerjee and Sudip Bandyopadhyay urged the Speaker to allow Moitra to defend herself on the floor, the latter refused to budge citing a precedent.

ACTOR LEELAVATHI PASSES AWAY AT 85

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

VETERAN actor Leelavathi passed away at Nelamangala near Bengaluru on Friday. She was 85.

Leelavathi was bedridden for a few months due to age-related issues. She developed breathing problems and was admitted to a private hospital at Nelamangala, where she breathed her last in the evening.

Her son and actor Vinod Raj said the last rites would be performed at their farmhouse at Soladevanahalli, where Leelavathi had been living with him for decades.

The mortal remains will be kept for the public to pay their last respects at Nelamangala Junior College Grounds till Saturday noon, after which the last rites will be performed.

Several film personalities, including senior actor Shivarajkumar, visited the hospital and paid their last respects.

After her health deteriorated recently, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and dignitaries from the film fraternity had visited her. P5

daCunha/AB/919

HUNTER BIDEN
INDICTED ON NINE TAX CHARGES

US President Joe Biden's son was indicted on nine tax charges in California on Thursday, as a special counsel probe into his business dealings intensifies.

EXPRESS READ

HC bail for one accused in Gauri murder case

BENGALURU: The High Court of Karnataka on Friday granted bail to Mohan Nayak N, an accused in the journalist Gauri Lankesh murder case. P3

Five killed as car collides with bus near Sirsi

SIRSI: Five persons, including four from a family, were killed when the car in which they were travelling collided with a KSRTC bus near Sirsi on Friday. P5

AI to help Army track enemy positions

MAYANK SINGH @ New Delhi

THE Army is in the process of inducting an indigenously-developed software that will enable it to profile all equipment on the enemy side and also help it better utilise and draw usable information out of intelligence inputs.

Sources said, "The software we are inducting is AI-based, which can collect electronic signatures of the equipment across the borders and profile them, thus helping in determining their movement in future."

Also, for faster decision making, AI software has been developed for predictive analysis. It will also help sift through intelligence input, which come in bulk, a source said. It will grade the inputs as per the credibility of sources. From the electronic signature, it will help in getting a sense of the enemy's "Order of Battle". After it detects the electronic signature of the arms, equipment and vehicle, it would get registered like a finger print, which would enable the Army to track the movement of the enemy's formations, another source said.

The data would be picked up by satellites and radars and help in analysis and prediction. By leveraging the power of digital technologies, the Army aims to enhance its operational readiness, intelligence gathering and tactical response.

The new software integration is being done in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics and Telecommunication (MeitY).

From doubting my voice
to embracing its
unique melody.
I'm on an extraordinary journey of becoming me.
A story I celebrate with something just as extraordinary.
Platinum. Its jewellery comes with a Pt950 mark,
a symbol of 95% purity. Making it incredibly rare.
Celebrate the joy of being you with platinum.
Rare, precious and true. Just like you.
Nithyashree Venkataramanan
Playback Singer
PLATINUM
eVARA
Very rare. Very you.
Scan to explore
the collection.
Explore www.platinumevara.com | /PlatinumEvara
LOOK FOR PT950 - THE ASSURANCE OF 95% PURE PLATINUM, A MARK OF AUTHENTICITY AND PURITY. For authentic platinum jewellery and assured buyback ask for your platinum purity assurance card.
Available at: Banashankari: Malabar Gold & Diamonds 8049597916 | Tanisha 9901939996 | Bannerghatta: Malabar Gold & Diamonds 4148916 | Tanisha 6366141616 | Basaveshwaranagar: Mukesh Jewellers 23408685 | Tanisha 41000016 | Commercial Street: C. Krishniah Chetty & CO 9513961869 | C. Krishniah Chetty & Sons 25588731 | Davanam Jewellers 41418181 | Josco Jewellers 41211312 | Sri Krishna Diamonds 40301111 | Dickenson Road: AVR Jewellers 25540007 | Bhima Jewellers 25065075 | Jos Alukkas Jewellery 25552280 | Joyalukkas 25093916 | Kalyan Jewellers 25550533 | Malabar Gold & Diamonds 41283916 | ORRA 9341070999 | Sulthan Diamonds & Gold 25596916 | Tanisha 8951386490 | Forum Falcon City Mall: Jos Alukkas Jewellery 6361340525 | Joyalukkas 6965611 | Malabar Gold & Diamonds 7994435167 | ORRA 8828338250 | Forum Koramangala Mall: ORRA 7710082442 | Forum Shanti Niketan Mall: ORRA 7710082321 | Tanisha 9606617771 | HBR Layout: Bhima Jewellers 25447711 | HSR Layout: Malabar Gold & Diamonds 29913916 | Neelkanth Jewellers 46963800 | Tanisha 42050252 | J.P. Nagar: Abaran 29906600 | Jayanagar: AVR Jewellers 26547007 | Bhima Jewellers 24441200, 9148965922 | GRT Jewellers 22450777 | Jos Alukkas Jewellery 32942120 | Josco Jewellers 41666842 | Joyalukkas 26634448 | Kalyan Jewellers 26647733 | Khazana Jewellery 41539900 | Malabar Gold & Diamonds 41526916 | ORRA 9341903803 | Prince Jewellery 42649999 | Reliance Jewels 41681803 | Sulthan Diamonds & Gold 26534916 | Tanisha 9886333665 | KR Puram: GRT Jewellers 29901515 | Jos Alukkas 9020011916 | Tanisha 6984870 | Kammanahalli: Bhima Jewellers 25447711 | GRT Jewellers 25461515 | Jos Alukkas 9605788759 | Joyalukkas 25039900 | Kalyan Jewellers 8792851933 | Malabar Gold & Diamonds 25421916 | Tanisha 25444444 | Kanakapura: Tanisha 41177916 | Koramangala: Bhima Jewellers 25537762 | Kalyan Jewellers 8848939533 | Malabar Gold & Diamonds 25522916 | ORRA 9731604260 | Reliance Jewels 41244551 | Senco Gold & Diamonds 41141197 | Tanisha 45462222 | M G Road: Abaran 25328600 | Joyalukkas 25589916 | Malabar Gold & Diamonds 6912916 | Malleswaram: AVR Jewellers 7845801681 | Bhima Jewellers 49767711 | C. Krishniah Chetty Jewellers 41001869 | GRT Jewellers 22921515 | Joyalukkas 23466916 | Kalyan Jewellers 23360533 | Malabar Gold & Diamonds 41535916 | ORRA 9987764979 | Tanisha 9164326100 | Marathahalli: Bhima Jewellers 28546611 | GRT Jewellers 25401515 | Joyalukkas 25073800 | Kalyan Jewellers 46837079 | Khazana Jewellery 41539900 | Malabar Gold & Diamonds 48514916 | Tanisha 9606617775 | Phoenix Market City: Joyalukkas 49626678 | Kalyan Jewellers 49626533 | Malabar Gold & Diamonds 32325916 | ORRA 9686166916 | Senco Gold & Diamonds 67266340 | Tanisha 67266400 | Prestige Forum Shantiniketan: Tanisha 9606617771 | RR Nagar: GRT Jewellers 23341515 | Malabar Gold & Diamonds 8716552916 | Tanisha 47574666 | Rajaji Nagar: Abaran 23598600 | Bhima Jewellers 23527712 | Jos Alukkas Jewellery 32956916 | Malabar Gold & Diamonds 49227916 | Richmond Road: Neelkanth Jewellers 22278846 | Nikhaar 22103266 | Yelahanka: GRT Jewellers 29908415 | Malabar Gold & Diamonds 29918916 | Tanisha 43364336 | Vijayanagar: Tanisha 88693363 | Malleshwaram: Merlecha Diamonds 9845047251 | Mahadevpura: ORRA 9686166916